

Hon. J. B. McNair

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park size would result in fabulous sums of money being poured into this Province from Ottawa. It is true that moderate expenditures would from time to time be made, but by no means in such amounts as they would have people believe.

Personally, I cannot become unduly exercised over the matter of National Parks. In my view our whole Province measures up in a high degree to National Park requirements. Any person who wishes to see Nature at her best can satisfy his desire by driving along any of our highways. Take the entire Saint John River Valley for example; where else can one find such a matchless and extensive scenic beauty?

However, in due season National Parks will come in New Brunswick. In connection I am reminded that British Columbia has four and Alberta five. It would be unwise however to attempt to predict the extent of their future development in this Province.

Paved Roads

While paying my respects to the Honourable gentlemen opposite, I feel constrained to make a passing observation regarding their structures on the increase under the present administration in the public debt made necessary by the construction of paved roads and bridges of a standard sufficient to meet the requirements of motor transportation.

To build or not to build,—that is the question which our Honourable friends will have to face whether they care to do so or not.

If we do not build paved roads then we must reconcile ourselves to the horse and buggy stage of development. In passing, I am constrained to observe that that is where we get headed for every time the Tory party gets control of affairs here and in Ottawa. We simply cannot afford the attempt to maintain our main arteries of travel at a standard capable of meeting the heavy demands of present day traffic by any other method.

In pursuing this policy we are merely doing what every other Province has done or is planning to do. In the issue of The Financier of March 11th, I find a report which expresses more clearly than I could hope to do certain salient features of this question, a portion of which I choose to quote:

"Mr. Raymond stressed the bad condition of the Quebec highways as a deterrent to automobile tourist traffic to this Province (Quebec) and cited figures showing that of the total number of cars coming to Canada for a short period in 1937, Ontario had secured 71 per cent, the Maritime Provinces 19 per cent and Quebec only 7 per cent, and that these figures compared with the same period of 1936, gave Ontario an increase of 12 per cent over last year, the Maritimes an increase of 13 per cent over last year, and Quebec a decrease of 2 per cent as compared with last year, and that no increase to this Province could be expected until the highways had been put on par with those of other neighboring provinces, which were now securing the cream of this lucrative tourist trade. He stated that the Government of Quebec was now alive to the necessity for prompt and adequate action in this connection as it appeared from a recent announcement that 50 million dollars would be voted for expenditure on the highways of this province, which improvement, in due time, would result in a greatly increased share of the automobile tourist traffic for Montreal and for the Province at large."

Apart from all other considerations the cost of a gravelled surface is prohibitive. I recently saw some figures compiled by the Engineering Department showing that the average cost per mile of maintaining a gravelled surface on the main highways today is around \$1600 a year. On that basis we would pay out over ten or twelve years on maintenance charges sufficient to pave these roads, in the meantime have nothing but continued discomfort and danger, and in the end possess nothing but debt. Such a policy would lead only to bankruptcy.

The only alternative is to resort to paving. How can we do so without borrowing money for the purpose? The Leader of the Opposition said a few days ago that we should pay as we go. How many miles of hard surfaced roads would be built under that policy? Yet, in support of it he quoted in all seriousness an editorial from one of the newspapers of the Province. My Honourable friend should at his age realize that all is not wisdom that appears in newspaper editorials.

For my part I doubt if he ever appeared in a more absurd light than in his absurd efforts to prove an absurd proposition by repeating in an absurd manner the absurd statements of others in this connection.

Some History

It has not escaped the attention of Honourable members that our friends opposite have taken to studying history; and out of their studies has come an effort to confound certain members of the present Government by quoting some of their utterances in this House when in Opposition.

I have noticed, however, that the Leader of the Opposition has been quick to disclaim the use of the historical method as against himself

and his colleagues. On more than one occasion he has advanced the proposition that the record of the Baxter, Tilley, Richards administration is no longer of interest nor material.

I do not wonder that he should shy from that record. But can he so easily escape responsibility? Did not he and certain other Honourable gentlemen opposite support that Government for many years? Although he failed in his persistent efforts to gain admittance into the inner sanctuary he aided and abetted the cabinet of the day in all its crimes of omission and commission.

For the purpose of facilitating their historical research I have prepared a list of subjects for their earnest consideration. The matters included were all under fire during the last election campaign, when they were defended by our Honourable friends opposite. Here is the list:—

1. The Grand Falls deal and the perpetual impost placed upon every electrical power site on the Saint John River below the Falls for the benefit of the International Paper Company.

2. The Miramichi pulp mill deal which one Tory Premier made and another unmade, and which I shall leave for discussion in due season by my Honourable colleague, the Minister of Lands and Mines.

3. The nominal increase in the net debt—in nine years of \$27,000,000. Taking into consideration the transfer to the Dominion of the Saint John Valley Railway with the liabilities connected therewith, the real increase was \$33,000,000. When the money was spent, what did we have to show for it? I shall make a few suggestions as I go along.

4. Pay roll padding. The Hartley investigation dealt with these practices as carried on during the 1930 election period. The Hughes enquiry dealt with them as carried on during the 1935 election period; and has proved that it is hard to teach old political dogs new tricks.

5. Provincial Hospital contracts under which \$1,240,000 was spent on new buildings. I have been informed on good authority that the added accommodation could have been provided for approximately one-quarter of the money.

6. Provincial Hospital equipment running into fancy figures, including the famous egg boiler which cost \$95, and is capable I understand of cooking six average sized eggs at one boiling. On a recent visit to the Hospital I viewed the room where are deposited nine sets of electric urns, complete, for use in making tea and coffee. They cost this Province thousands of dollars and have never been used. I would recommend that my Honourable friends opposite in the course of their research, visit that chamber of horrors.

7. The Smith Foundry deal in which the former Minister of Public Works took over from a political buddy in Fredericton the job of trying to handle a white elephant by its tail.

8. The contract for the construction of the present Normal School, which was let at a price \$56,000, above the lowest tender which was thrown out on a technicality.

9. The Montgomery rock pile which grew out of a contract made on the eve of the 1930 election between the then Minister of Public Works and a fish trader in Dalhousie. It resulted in clearing the way for the Minister's nomination as one of the Tory candidates in Restigouche County and in adding approximately \$75,000 to the public debt of the Province.

10. Road Machinery purchases. The Machinery and equipment purchased by the old Government cost the Province nearly two millions of dollars. I would strongly recommend that our Honourable friends make a particular study of the methods pursued by the former Minister of Public Works and his friend, Mr. F. W. Smythe in their mutual dealings. In this connection I am reminded that our friends opposite have on different occasions made reference to a statement alleged to have been made during the 1935 election campaign to the effect that when they came into office the Liberals would dump that machinery into the Bay of Fundy. For their information, I may say that when we looked the Bay over we found it was not big enough for the purpose.

11. The Phantom banquet, and in connection therewith the smuggling of liquor by Government officials into the United States. I can be of particular assistance to my Honourable friends in connection with this matter. I made a special study of it back in 1935 and made some statements in regard to it for which I was sued at the instigation of the Big-wigs of the Tory Party. The writ however, died with the Tilley Government.

12. The Atkinson stumpage deal. We can still smell that one.

I do not for a moment suggest that the list I have submitted is complete. I have deliberately refrained from making it so. I did not wish to discourage my Honourable friends at the outset of their studies. As they progress I shall gladly furnish them with supplementary lists.

The Leaders Speech

It is my intention at this stage to deal with some phases of the speech delivered in this Chamber yesterday

by the Leader of the Opposition and to touch upon some of the extravagances and inconsistencies he indulged in. I feel it will not be necessary for me to quote any of his language, for the echoes of it are still with us.

It is obvious that his speech becomes easier for my Honourable friend every time he uses it; further, that the improvements which time and repetition bring consist only in the addition of adjectives, and still more adjectives.

He dealt upon the difficulties experienced by the Province last year in floating some bond issues, and in connection therewith scoffed at a suggestion advanced a few days ago by the Minister of Education, Federal and Municipal Relations to the effect that those difficulties were due in some measure to the irrational and extravagant talk indulged in at the time by my Honourable friend in relation to the financial condition of this Province.

He pooh-poohed the idea that his position as head of the Tory party in this Province entitled anyone to attach to his statements any importance or weight. We on this side of the House will not on that point disagree with him. But the people in Boston and New York have not our intimate knowledge of the sad and sorry condition of the exiled Party which my Honourable friend is attempting to lead back to the promised land, and how little dignity or importance attaches to its leadership.

My friend is much given to speaking of duty, patriotism, and democracy. Yesterday at one point I felt he was going to start waving the old flag. I would suggest to him that even the leader of a party in opposition has his duties to observe, and that the language of irresponsibility from whatever quarter it arises is a weak support for our system of free institutions.

For the first time in this House he declared he was not opposed to the building of paved roads. We were interested to learn that, for we had begun to think he was viewing everything through jaundiced eyes. He claimed, however, that we should build a less expensive type of road.

Only last week one of his associates from Carleton County declared that the pavement now being laid was not heavy enough, and indicated that he favoured the much more expensive type laid by the old Government which had an inch of sheet asphalt on top. The latter type is not only more costly but is non-flexible; and because of its brittle qualities has proved quite unsuitable for our country roads where frost conditions are bound to cause some degree of heaving and consequent cracking.

I would like to ask my Honourable friend how he proposes to build roads without money. Surely his overwrought imagination does not suggest to him that hot air will do the trick.

Let me assure him that the progressive programme carried on by the present administration was deliberately designed for a sound purpose. Too long this Province has been trailing along in the dust of the other Provinces in Canada. With faith in the possibilities of our Province and with confidence in the stability and good judgment of our people in the early days of our tenure of office we mapped out our road programs, convinced that the same if carried out to completion will prove one of the important factors in our general scheme to place this Province on the map, and ensure for New Brunswick her proper place in the Confederation.

Our highway policy was not born of despair. It required courage to shape and pursue the course that has been followed. We knew there would be much blue ruin talk of the type we heard here yesterday. We were aware that much ballyhoo would go the rounds.

Yesterday my Honourable friend asked what was going to happen when the next depression came around. I have to confess that we gave little thought to that eventuality, for to us it is inconceivable that after the bitter experiences of a few years ago the people of this Province will in our day and generation lend their assistance to bring about another depression by placing the Tory Party in office, either here or at Ottawa.

I cannot allow this occasion to pass without touching upon the strictures directed by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday against the Chairman of the Electric Power Commission. He sought to ridicule my colleague because he uses the language of sincerity. Why should my colleague not do so when sincerity is the keynote of his character? I would suggest to my Honourable friend opposite that his own presentations would carry more conviction if they were hedged about with greater sincerity.

In this connection I am reminded that my friend opposite yesterday referred to a new system of book-keeping authorized for the Electric Power Commission by this Legislature last year. Its purpose was to avoid keeping duplicate accounts in the office of the Comptroller-General. He gave us quite a song and dance over it. I would remind him that there is no change in the system of auditing.

As heretofore, all the accounts of the Commission are audited by the provincial auditors who are the same people as did the adding under the old Government. In fact the change was made on the recommendation of those auditors. The purpose of the new arrangement was to avoid unnecessary work.

In his speech yesterday my Honourable friend claimed that when the legislation in question was before the House a year ago he protested strongly against it. I shall contradict him flatly on that point. I was present last session on every occasion when the Committee of the Whole dealt with the various bills. He never raised a suggestion regarding the amendment in question.

The only discussion that I recall by the Leader of the Opposition took place when the bill relating to Natural Products, introduced by the Minister of Agriculture, was before the Committee. On that occasion my Honourable friend opposite did suggest an amendment consisting of three or four words which in deference to him were placed in the bill but on second thought were struck out a few days later as useless and irrelevant.

That, I feel confident, was the sum total of the assistance received by this House from our five friends opposite when the legislative program of last Session was being dealt with. For much of the time when the Committee of the Whole was at work many of them were not even present. This was particularly noticeable after the cheques for the sessional indemnities had been distributed.

I am aware that some months after the Session was over the Leader of the Opposition, during the course of his public addresses, when he was campaigning for the leadership of his Party, did criticize some of the government legislation of last Session. But it took him months to learn what the legislation contained.

Agriculture

Yesterday my Honourable friend severely castigated the Minister of Agriculture for the manner in which he is directing the work of his Department. I feel constrained to make some observations on the gratuitous attack that was made upon him.

The Leader of the Opposition particularly criticized the Minister because the latter was obliged, in order to promote his progressive policies, to re-arrange, and make some small additions to, his staff. He claimed that this had resulted in increased costs.

The usual criticism against the Department of Agriculture has been that it did not spend sufficient money in comparison with the expenditures of the other departments. If this branch of the service had failed to show an extension of its work our friends opposite would be the first to criticize it.

The Leader of the Opposition yesterday in the paroxysms of his sarcasm referred to the hog policy of the Department. He gave the bacon hog a real run around. At times I did not know whether he was chasing the hog or the hog was chasing him.

My Honourable friend should realize that when he attacks the Minister of Agriculture he is likely to find himself on dangerous ground. My Honourable colleague needs no champion in this Province, but we who know the splendid job he is doing, his untiring energy and zeal, his devotion to his work, the long days and late nights he spends in working out the problems of agriculture, developing his policies to improve agricultural conditions and arranging for their execution are only too ready to jump into the fray.

The only fault my colleague has, if the same can be called a fault, is his modesty. I am sure that this quality of heart and mind will never cause my Honourable friend opposite any embarrassment.

Whatever may be said of the rest of us, no fair minded person who has any interest in agriculture and who knows the facts will deny that today this Province has the best Minister of Agriculture of our day and generation at least.

For the edification of my Honourable friend I would like to quote some comments which appeared on October twenty-first last, in "The Hartland Observer", a newspaper not unfriendly to our friends opposite. In the editorial are set out certain observations which Mr. W. W. Hubbard made concerning my colleague's administration of his department. Many of us know Mr. Hubbard who never has been a supporter of this Government. He is, however, a good citizen, fair minded in his outlook, and willing to give credit, even to a political opponent, when credit is due.

The editorial referred to reads in part as follows:

"I believe that we have had and have particularly at the present time provincial ministers of agriculture and executive governments that have tried to lead, but they have been retarded by an apathy even among occupants of farm lands that has prevented them from diverting to agricultural promotions, revenues now devoted to other forms of public service. In this connection I cannot too highly commend the action of the provincial minister of agriculture, Hon. A. C. Taylor, in opening up and encouraging the marketing of our potatoes in South America, which has

resulted already this season in the sale of seed potatoes alone to the gross value of over a million dollars and distributing among our potato growers more than half that amount. This was done in spite of the fact that bureaucrats of the Dominion Department of Trade and Commerce declared that no such market existed and not only refused to assist but actually tried to divert buyers from New Brunswick to undermine the work the New Brunswick Government was trying to do.

"Not only have the potato growers benefited from this trade development; for over three million feet of lumber is being used in constructing crates and many hundred workers are employed in their construction, railways are running trains night and day and port workers are getting a share of the proceeds.

"The same good work can be done for other products especially in supplying the home market, but the consumer must join his voice to that of the producer and use his influence if we are to have a demand in the Province which will stimulate production."

According to his observations yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition should he ever become Premier, is going to dismember all the departments and branches of the service and then try to stick the pieces together in a new order. He will doubtless find himself in the sad plight of Humpty Dumpty. In one breath he criticized this administration for making some additions to the machinery of government; in the next he declared he would add some new units. Among other things he would have a new department of industry and labour under an additional Minister with a Deputy Minister acceptable to labour.

Last year he was for setting up an industrial commission which, so far as I could figure the matter out, was to take over the major portion of the business of government in this Province. If my Honourable friend ever becomes Premier I think that would be a splendid move.

He criticized the Old Age Pension Board and would establish in its place an entirely new and novel set up. He explained that he would discharge the directors and all the investigators, clerks and stenographers, and have one of the Ministers, I think he suggested the Minister of Education, and his deputy, do all their work. Let me remind him that Ottawa furnishes three-quarters of the pension moneys and requires a very close check on the entire business and doubtless would have a lot to say on his proposal.

Yet again I am constrained to observe that if the five gentlemen opposite ever take the front seats on this side of the House, it would be a wise arrangement for them to take over the work of the clerks and stenographers in the various departments and set up an outside Commission, as was done in Newfoundland, to run the affairs of the Province.

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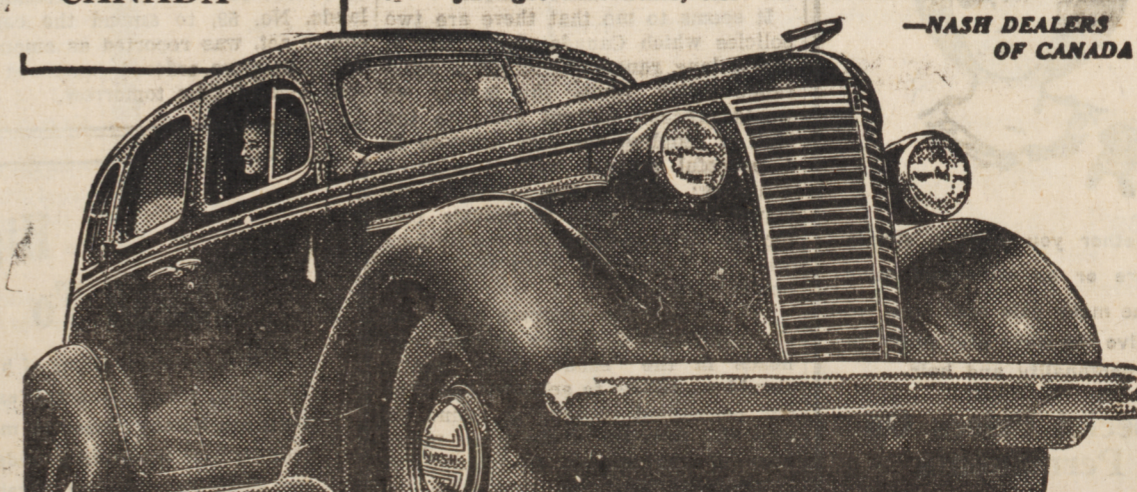
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"SALADA" TEA

Perhaps I should apologize to the House for the length of time taken in discussing my Honourable friends opposite. Without further delay I shall proceed to discuss some important matters.

First, however, I wish to associate myself with previous speakers in the various tributes that have been paid to former members of this House, as well as to the late federal member for Saint John-Albert, who in recent months have crossed the Great Divide. Their lives were rich in achievement, and their fine qualities of heart and mind will live long as a fragrant memory with those who were privileged to know them. It was of their type that the poet wrote those immortal lines,—

"The lives of great men all remind us. We can make our lives sublime; And departing leave behind us, Footprints on the sands of time."

The B. N. A. Act

During the course of the debates of this session there have been frequent allusions to the crowning of our King and Queen in May of last year. No one could fail but observe the deep sincerity of the sentiments expressed on both sides of the House in reference to that great happening. In no part of the Empire, I believe did the historic event stir up more intense feelings of loyalty and devotion than in New Brunswick.

Reflecting upon the deep meaning of last year's Coronation—I have often wondered if the people of this Province fully realize the significance of certain trends which threaten the maintenance of the ties which now bind this Province to the Mother Country.

On other occasions in this House I have mentioned the attempts that were being made to remove the charter of this Province out of the custody of Westminster. The proposal has taken different forms. In the first instance it was suggested that the Parliament of Canada should be given by the Imperial Parliament power to amend the British North America Act; later it was suggested that the Dominion Parliament should be empowered to pass a new Constitution Act for itself and the Provinces, which of course could be amended from time to time by the Dominion Parliament.

At different times I have endeavored

to show that either scheme, if carried out, would endanger the position of this Province as an independent self-governing unit of the Empire, sovereign within the sphere of its legislative powers, and place it in a position of subordination to the Dominion Parliament. In fact it would tend to bring about a legislative union in Canada which our forefathers in 1867 wisely rejected in favour of a federal union.

British Connection

I have also sought on occasion to suggest that the proposed constitutional changes would probably result in altering the relationship of this Province with Great Britain. Today we have our direct connection with the Mother Country which will be maintained so long as the charter of our Province remains domiciled at Westminster. While that condition obtains, no action of any Canadian authority other than this Legislature can separate us from the Empire.

It is not my intention to elaborate this matter at this time, but in view of certain suggestions that have been thrown out, particularly in an article which appeared in a Canadian newspaper last November, written by one who has been described as the 'Voice of the Maritimes', I wish to take the opportunity of saying that there has been no change in my attitude on these questions.

The suggestion of a "mellowing" or change of heart had its basis in a confusion in the mind of some persons between the matter I have just referred to and another matter, related it is true to the former, but of quite different aspect and significance.

We on this side of the House have never questioned that it might be desirable to have the Imperial Parliament make some changes in the division of legislative powers between the Dominion and the Provinces which was established by the Imperial Parliament when it passed the B. N. A. Act. For instance, it has been suggested that it would be to the general advantage to have the Imperial Parliament amend the Act so as to effect a transfer from the Provinces to the Dominion of jurisdiction over unemployment insurance. This Legislature may, or may not, agree to that proposal. But in any event such a proposal is quite distinct in its

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